

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated February 22, 2006. Claims 1 to 4 are in the application, of which Claim 1 is still the only independent claim. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

A new title has been selected.

A formal objection was lodged against Claim 1, it being said that the phrase "subjected to overlapped exposure" should be changed to "subjected to overlap exposure". The objection is respectfully traversed. The phrase "overlapped exposure" is apparently correct, such that no change is deemed necessary. Withdrawal of the objection is respectfully requested.

Claim 3 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, for alleged indefiniteness, based on use of the phrase "dot system". The rejection is respectfully traversed, since it is felt that those of ordinary skill would have no difficulty in understanding the meaning of this term, particularly in view of the specification, prior art and general knowledge of those of ordinary skill. Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 4 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent 6,504,147 (Ito) in view of U.S. Patent 5,887,124 (Iwasaki). The rejection is respectfully traversed. Generally speaking, the basis for traversal is that, in view of the Office Action's concessions on the deficiencies in Ito, such deficiencies are not remedied by Iwasaki since

Iwasaki is directed to an ink jet printing system and not to an image forming apparatus that forms images by scanning of multiple light beams. The traversal is explained in more detail below.

The invention is directed to an image forming apparatus that forms an image through scanning of multiple light beams on a photosensitive member, and also provides for multiple print modes including a first mode and a second mode for forming high resolution images in a main scanning direction.

Claim 1 is directed to an image scanning apparatus of which a representative embodiment is illustrated in the third embodiment herein. As shown in that embodiment, the following numerical relationships are satisfied:

$$n = i1 \times k1 = i2 \times k2$$

$$k1 \neq k2$$

$k1$ and $k2$ are natural numbers equal to or larger than 2

By virtue of the foregoing, particularly with $k2 \neq k1$, and with both $k1$ and $k2 \geq 2$, there are at least two high-resolution printing modes in the main scanning direction, in addition to the normal-resolution mode represented by the case of $k = 1$.

In entering the rejection over Ito in view of Iwasaki, the Office Action conceded that Ito failed to disclose much of the subject matter of Claim 1. Applicant agrees that Ito is significantly deficient in the disclosure that is applicable against Claim 1, and more pointedly would note that Ito is unconcerned with increasing resolution in a main scanning direction, but rather is primarily concerned with increasing resolution in a sub-scanning direction.

Reliance was placed on the patent to Iwasaki as allegedly showing the features that were missing from Ito. Applicant respectfully submits that such reliance is misplaced. First and foremost, for example, the Office Action took the position that Iwasaki "discloses an image processing apparatus for use in a light beam scanner ..." (Office Action, page 4). Actually, Iwasaki is completely unrelated to image forming apparatuses that form images based on scanning of multiple light beams. In fact, Iwasaki is particularly directed to an ink jet printing apparatus, which forms images by ejecting ink droplets from an ink jet head, as described at column 3, lines 38 to 41.

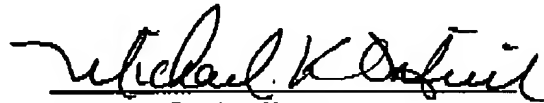
As such, Iwasaki is completely unconcerned with image forming apparatuses that form images by scanning of multiple light beams, such that its disclosure would not have commended itself to anyone of ordinary skill in this field of technology.

Moreover, even assuming that the technology of Iwasaki were somehow usable in the image forming apparatus of Ito, Iwasaki still does not disclose two or more high-resolution modes in the main scanning direction. Specifically, and relative to the notation used in the claims, page 4 of the Office Action apparently assumes that $k_1 = 2$ and $k_2 = 1$; however, the claims very clearly specify that both $k_1, k_2 \geq 2$.

It is therefore respectfully submitted that no permissible combination of Ito and Iwasaki would have rendered the present invention obvious. Allowance of the claims herein is respectfully requested.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, California office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,



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